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HUMAN EVENTS
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Unaware of Reagan's Proposal

Carter's CIA Chief Embarrasses Contra Foes

Whatever the outcome of the Contra aid votes, its foes were hardly helped by Jimmy Carter's CIA director, Admiral Stansfield Turner. Turner, who testified against the President's \$14-million aid the floor of the House when Angola was the issue," the Illinois lawmaker continued. " 'Don't worry,' they said, 'the Russians don't get along with Africans.' One great leader in your Administration [U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young] said the Cubans were a 'stabilizing' force in Angola. How long do we wait in Angola?

"I suggest, with all due respect, Admiral, the Communist I.Q. of your Administration wasn't really too high. I look at President Carter's May 22, 1977, Notre Dame speech," Hyde added, "when he said we are over 'our inordinate fear of Communism.' Time marches on. Two years later, he tells Frank Reynolds after the invasion of Afghanistan, 'I've learned more about Communism in the last three days than I ever knew before.' Now either you weren't advising him, or he wasn't listening.

"One has to wonder, when you were at the helm, we traded the Shah for the Ayatollah. I concede you're qualified by experience and training," Hyde bluntly told the ex-CIA director, "but I just take with great caution the advice you give us on judgment."

Hyde's wariness appeared to be well-founded, given several embarrassing exchanges Turner had with other members of the subcommittee. Not only did the ex-CIA director reveal himself ignorant of key details of the Reagan plan he was opposing, but he went to transparently absurd lengths to defend the Sandinista regime.

After Turner declared the Nicaraguan people "are better off in education" than they were under the predecessor regime of President Anastasio Somoza, an incredulous Rep. Dan Burton (R.-Ind.) produced a mathematics textbook the Sandinistas have introduced in Nicaraguan schools.

" 'Two machine guns plus two machine guns plus two machine guns equal how many machine guns?' And 'two hand grenades plus two hand grenades plus two hand grenades equals how many hand grenades?' " Burton quoted the book as saying. "You have the equivalent type of educational process in English and literature," the Indianan observed. "It's not the type of education we'd like to see."

"I think it's better that people learn how to add, even if they add with machine guns," Turner blurted out, provoking many in the packed hearing room to laughter.

Perhaps the Admiral's worst moments came during questioning by Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R.-N.Y.), who noted the Reagan plan's call for a cease-fire. "I didn't think he [the President] proposed a cease-fire. Maybe he did," Turner responded. All of this was too much for Rep. Hyde, who got Gilman to yield and pointedly informed Turner that "The [Reagan] proposal — its key — is a 60-day cease-fire, and additional time if they're negotiating in good-faith. That's a fundamental element of the President's peace plan. Sorry you didn't know that."

When Gilman noted in a follow-up question that the Reagan cease-fire plan was endorsed by Arturo Cruz, the ex-Sandinista ambassador to Washington who heads the largest non-guerrilla opposition group in Nicaragua, Turner said: "That's news to me."

"I was very dismayed to see that our previous witness had not even looked at or was not aware of the President's proposal," panel member Rep. John McCain (R.-Ariz.) commented after Turner's testimony. "I think it's pretty hard to oppose something you don't know enough about." But that is precisely what Turner attempted to do in his disastrous performance last week.